

Helena Interagency Dispatch Center

Cooperating Agencies:

USDA Forest Service- Helena National Forest

USDI Bureau of Land Management

Montana Dept. of Natural Resources & Conservation- Central Lands Office

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks

Lewis and Clark, Broadwater, Jefferson and Meagher Counties

Helena, Montana

NEWS RELEASE

For Release Immediately

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FIRE RESTRICTIONS TO BEGIN THIS WEEK

HELENA, MONT., July 17, 2007- Stage 1 fire restrictions will be implemented this Friday, by the Helena National Forest and members of the Helena Fire Restrictions division. “Thunderstorms coupled with record-breaking heat this week is a recipe for wildfires and local officials are instituting fire restrictions in an effort to reduce new fire starts.” stated Amy Teegarden, spokesperson for the Helena National Forest.

Restrictions on smoking and open fires on federal and state lands, as well as on private-forested lands in Lewis and Clark County will take effect Friday, July 20 at 0001. Restrictions will be enforced on lands administered by the Helena National Forest, Bureau of Land Management and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks in Lewis and Clark, Broadwater and Jefferson Counties.

Under the restrictions campfires may be built only in developed recreation sites such as campgrounds and picnic areas. Campfires in rock rings and the use of wood stoves in canvas tents outside of campgrounds and other developed sites are prohibited.

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On the Helena National Forest- administered lands, campfires are allowed within metal fire pits only at the following recreation sites: Deep Creek, Skidway, Gipsy Lake, Vigilante, Park Lake, Coulter, Meriwether, Moose Creek, Tenmile, Kading, Cromwell Dixon, Aspen Grove, Copper Creek and Big Nelson campgrounds and picnic areas as well as all administered recreation rental cabins on the Helena National Forest. The Helena National Forest portion of Scapegoat Wilderness is not under restrictions at this time.

On BLM and MFWP administered lands, campfires are allowed within metal fire pits only at the following recreation sites: Crow Creek, Departure Point, Devil's Elbow, Galena Gulch, Holter Dam, Holter Lake, Log Gulch, Toston Dam, White Sandy, Black Sandy, Lewis & Clark Caverns and York's Island fishing access.

Smoking in the affected lands is prohibited outside of buildings, vehicles and developed recreation sites, unless you are in an area three feet in diameter that's cleared of burnable vegetation, or inside developed recreation sites.

These "Stage One" restrictions don't apply to stoves using liquid petroleum or LFG fuels. They also do not apply within city limits or to activities that land-managing agencies have specifically given permits for.

These restrictions are in place until further notice. For more information about fire restrictions and closures in Montana call the nearest federal or state land agency or visit the following website.

<http://www.mt.blm.gov/fire/restrictions>

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